

VZCZCXRO0676
PP RUEHFK RUEHKSO RUEHNAG RUEHNH
DE RUEHKO #5674/01 3620247
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 280247Z DEC 07
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0624
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUYNAC/COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA PRIORITY
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RHHMHBA/COMPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI//N541// PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/HQ PACAF HICKAM AFB HI//CC/PA// PRIORITY
RUHBANB/OKINAWA FLD OFC US FORCES JAPAN CP BUTLER JA PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/USFJ PRIORITY
INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 5200
RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA 7596
RUEHNAG/AMCONSUL NAGOYA 3898
RUEHKSO/AMCONSUL SAPPORO 5830
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 8865
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 0847
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 2035
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 6908
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 7598
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 005674

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STATE FOR I/RF, PA/PR/FPC/W, IIP/G/EA, EAP/PD, R/MR,
EAP/J, EAP/P, PM;
USTR FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE;
TREASURY FOR OASIA/IMI;
SECDEF FOR OASD/PA;
CP BUTLER OKINAWA FOR AREA FIELD OFFICE;
PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OIIP](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [JA](#)

SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - PAKISTAN

LEAD STORIES: Most Friday morning papers gave top play to the assassination of former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto on Thursday.

[1](#)1. "U.S. Concerned About Impact on War on Terror" A Washington dispatch in the business-oriented Nikkei wrote (12/28): "The death of pro-American political leader Bhutto has dealt a heavy blow to the Bush administration. President Bush condemned the act of terrorism as a 'cowardly act by murderous extremists who are trying to undermine Pakistan's democracy,' and expressed concern about the incident's impact on democratization in the nation.... Political instability in Pakistan, which has nuclear weapons, will be a diplomatic challenge for Washington from the standpoint of nuclear nonproliferation."

[1](#)2. "Pakistan Loses 'Key' to Stability" The liberal Tokyo Shimbun's correspondent report from Bangkok stated (12/28): "Benazir Bhutto, leader of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), was killed on Thursday during her campaign for the general election to be held on January

[1](#)8. The PPP appeared certain to do well in the coming election, and cooperation between Bhutto and President Musharraf had been expected. The death of the person who held the key to stability and democratization in that country will inevitably worsen the confusion in Pakistani politics."

[1](#)3. "International Community Faces Challenge" The conservative Sankei wrote (12/28): "The assassination of former Prime Minister Bhutto has worsened the chaos

in Pakistan. Further destabilization of the only nuclear-armed Muslim nation could seriously damage the U.S. military's ongoing operations in Afghanistan.... The Bhutto-led PPP was expected to gain seats in the coming general election, and the next Pakistani administration was expected to take a hard-line approach to extremists. Bhutto's death has dealt a severe blow to the global community, including the U.S., which is looking to eradicate al-Qaeda and the Taliban."

¶4. "General Election Could Be Postponed" The liberal Mainichi's report from New Delhi speculated (12/28): "The U.S.-outlined scenario of a coalition between President Musharraf and PPP leader Bhutto following the general election on January 8 as part of a USG initiative to democratize the nation has collapsed. There is speculation that the scheduled election could be postponed if the political confusion in Pakistan deepens."

¶5. "Assassination Adds to Turmoil in South Asia" The liberal Asahi's report from Bangkok stated (12/28): "The impact of Bhutto's murder on the international community will be greater than that of past assassinations, as the effects will likely be felt beyond Pakistan. Pakistan became the first Muslim country to go nuclear in 1998 and has been at the frontline of the U.S.-led war on terrorism since 9/11.... The general election set for January 8 is unlikely to be held as scheduled. Rioting in Pakistan is a distinct possibility, given the strong reaction of PPP supporters to the assassination. There does not

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appear to be any way to calm the situation, as Pakistan appears to be on the verge of explosion."

DONOVAN